(b) the number of beds for which provision has been made in this centre and the progress made in this regard alongwith the number of beds provided at present;

(c) the budget allocated for it alongwith the details of budget allocation and expenditure for the last three years;

(d) the amount of funds sanctioned for construction and for equipments, separately and whether accordingly the construction work has been completed and equipments have been procured; and

(e) the time schedule fixed for completion of the above said programme?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (e) There is a proposal to set up a Regional Cancer Centre at North East Indira Gandhi Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong. No foundation stone has been laid for the Centre so far.

**Free treatment for HIV/AIDS patients**

*354. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per a report called Towards Universal Access: Scaling Up Priority HIV/AIDS Interventions in the Health Sector, jointly released by the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNAIDS and UNICEF recently states that among the 39.5 million people living with HIV/AIDS in the world, 5.7 millions are in India;

(b) whether the National AIDS Control Organisation started giving free paediatric doses of anti-retroviral drugs to children under the national programme in December 2006; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to provide treatment to all the HIV and AIDS patients free of cost?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (c) In its report on the Global AIDS epidemic published by UNAIDS in May, 2006, 5.7million persons were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in India. During 2007, NACO reviewed the estimation method alongwith national and international experts; including UNAIDS, WHO, CDC Atlanta etc. The review was carried out keeping in mind the availability of reports based on National Family Health Survey-III, Integrated Biological and Behaviour Survey in High Risk Groups and an expanded sentinel surveillance. Following the expert consultation, NACO estimated that persons living with HIV/AIDS in India range between 2 to 3 million. Of them, it is estimated that there are 70,000 children below 15 years of age who are living with the virus.

In order to ensure universal access of treatment to children, the National Peadiatric AIDS initiative was launched on 30th November, 2006. Under this Initiative, free paediatric doses of Anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs and free diagnostics

are provided. Special campaigns were launched to screen high risk children so as to detect and treat HIV infected children. Till date, 22,217 new HIV+ children have been detected and 6338 children eligible put on ART at 127 ART centres in 31 States of the country. The peadiatric formulations of ARVs for 17,000 children have been made available at these centres. This initiative also includes developing paediatric ART guidelines, training of pediatricians and counselors, establishment of seven Regional Paediatric ART centres, free CD4 monitoring, free DNA PCR test for children up to 18 months, liquid formulations for babies weighing less than 5 kg, diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections and micro-nutrient supplementation.

Under NACP-III, it is proposed to provide free ART to 300,000 adults and 40,000 children through 250 ART Centres and Link ART Centres. All HIV positive persons accessing public health facilities and clinically eligible for ART shall be provided free ART.

**Health scheme for BPL people**

*355. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any health scheme for the poor people living below the poverty line in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and what is the criteria for identification of the beneficiaries;

(c) whether steps are being taken or proposed to be taken by Government for implementation of the said scheme throughout the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (e) The Government has formulated several schemes for providing health services to citizens specially those who are below the poverty line. These include programmes for providing Reproductive and Child Health Services, control of communicable and non communicable diseases, providing curative as well as preventive/promotive care through a chain of primary, secondary and tertiary care health institutions.

Government has also launched the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) throughout the country with special focus on 18 states which have relatively poor health indicators/infrastructure. {These include 8 Empowered Action Group States (Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Orissa and Rajasthan), 8 NE States, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir}.

The main aim of NRHM is to provide accessible, affordable, accountable, effective and reliable primary health care facilities, especially, to the poor and vulnerable sections of the population.